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EDUCATION AND HEREDITY, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT
IN HUNGARY

Termesztudományok
/Nature and Society/, Vol CXIV,
No 12, December 1955, Budapest,
Pages 734-739

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The purpose of this article is to shed light on the oft-debated question as to the role education plays in the development of individual character and as to its relationship to other factors which likewise influence individual character. Our particular intention is to determine the problem of the interplay of heredity, environment, and education.

The resolution of this question is of basic importance in the practice of pedagogy and education. Creative pedagogical work is possible only if it is based on the principle that education does play a role in the development of human character, and not only in a small, but in an overwhelming degree. Without the optimism radiating from this conviction the educator's work would be meaningless. If education would not play a serious role in the development of human character, then what could be the outlook for educational work or why educate people at all? Negation of the importance and power of education is tantamount to the rejection of the science of pedagogy itself.

Practical experience has long ago settled the problem as to whether men can be taught. Every society took care of the education of people as it saw the light and also succeeded in training them in conformity with its own interests. Latter day experiences convincingly demonstrate the teachability of people. Then why and wherefrom the theories which cast doubt upon or expressly deny the feasibility and importance of education? Evidently the purpose of such theories is to prove "scientifically" the hereditary right of the exploiting ruling classes to power and economic as well as cultural prerogatives. These theories must prove that the oppressed classes are inherently inferior physically, intellectually, and morally, and that they are thus unsuited to share in government and unable to improve themselves in the realm of culture and intellect. To "substantiate" the impossibility of educating people, to prove the fate-ordained omnipotence of heredity and environment is a most important weapon in the hands of the oppressors especially at the time of the awakening of the oppressed classes and the exacerbation of the class war.

Materialists of Bygone Ages on the Role of Education

The great progressive thinkers and pedagogues of bygone ages have ranged themselves against these reactionary fabrications about the unsuitability of people for education. Outstanding theoreticians of the progressive bourgeoisie in its struggle against feudalism have disclaimed with deep conviction and serious scientific arguments the opinions of the aristocracy and its intellectual representatives regarding the overwhelming importance of innate ideas and hereditary factors which were supposed to justify the right of ancient nobility to govern and enjoy all the earthly goods. They boldly announced that men are born as equals and that their individuality and their intellectual and moral opinions are the products of their education, social environment, and their individual experiences in life. They show deep democratic and humanitarian ideas, suggest universal education of the masses, and fight for its adoption. Their pedagogical ideas are nurtured on progressive social and philosophical tenets. Suffice it to mention Komensky, the

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representatives of French materialism, the Revolutionary Democrats of Russia, and Hungary's own Michael Tancsics.

Helvetius, the outstanding figure of the French materialism, completely denies the role of heredity. He regards education as paramount and considers it to be the sum total of every impact of environment upon the individual; in his opinion "the finer or less refined state of our senses" has no influence whatsoever upon the development of our intellectual attainments. Only education makes us what we are. This theory, which in its own time was a most courageous challenge to the educational monopoly of the nobility and a demand for the universal right of everyone for learning, exaggerated somewhat the importance of education. Thus Diderot felt compelled to criticize this statement of Helvetius. "You maintain," wrote Diderot, "that education is all powerful. Rather you should say that education can achieve very much." But even Diderot is unable to explain the relationship of education and heredity.

The French materialists launched very correct ideas regarding the influence of the social environment on the development of human character. They state that man is the product of his society. The individual corresponds to the social environment. In a good and "sensibly" organized society people are good and ethical; in a defective society they are vile and bad. Freedom turns out sincere humanists striving for the common good, while tyranny spawns base cowards. These thoughts of the French materialists were, no doubt, progressive, and they could lead to revolutionary conclusions, i.e., that the existing tyranny and the feudal society should be done away with. The French materialists however never reached these revolutionary conclusions; rather they thought that it is possible and necessary to change the existing society by means of education. Let us, they opine, train the sovereign and everybody else to be good, enlightened personages, and thus the whole of society will be changed.

We may thus perceive a basic contradiction in the doctrine of the French materialists. On the one hand they declare that education is omnipotent, that society could be changed by training, and on the other they maintain that man is completely the product of his surroundings and conditions. To alter his environment it is necessary to educate man in a different manner, but oh, who is going to educate him? Marx underscores this contradiction in his No 3 Feuerbach thesis. He points out that the doctrine of the French materialists "must ipso facto lead to a complete rift in society, one part of which rises above society."

So the French materialists were unable scientifically to solve the relationship of either heredity and education or education and social environment. These questions may be resolved only by the light of the Pavlovian physiology and historical materialism, through Marxian science. The French materialists, although in their own time they represented a progressive and scientific ideology, could not correctly solve the problem of education because of their historical idealism they did not understand the role of the revolutionary class struggle in the development of society, instead of which they based their hopes on native reason and enlightenment. They did not perceive that environment is changed by the revolutionary activity of the masses who mold themselves also during this process. They did not see that only revolutionary action can create new systems of production and society, which in turn permits a new style of education that can change people.

The Revolutionary Democrats of Russia went much further in solving the above problems. Chernyshevskiy for example does not completely negate heredity; he points out that we inherit from our parents our

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temperament, our craving for knowledge, and the desire to improve our lot in life. But he firmly states that in molding human character education and environment play the decisive role. The Russian Revolutionary Democrats understood much better the relationship of education and society than did the French materialists. They pointed out that "those who lack political power cannot rid themselves of the oppression bred by poverty and ignorance." Chernyshevskiy clearly saw that existing social conditions determine the style of education and thus implied that society could not be changed solely by education. This requires mass activity and political struggle, wherefore he devoted his life to organizing movements directed toward changing the social order and to prepare youth for its duties in the pending struggle. Of course the Russian Revolutionary Democrats could not be fully consistent in their time either, for essentially they also believed that knowledge plays a decisive role in social progress.

Resurrecting the Doctrine of Original Sin

The optimistic, democratic theories regarding education, which were closely connected with materialistic philosophy, had their inception in countries where revolutionary views were maturing. That the society of eighteenth century Germany was not ripe for the bourgeois revolution may be seen in the German idealistic philosophy and its pedagogical appendages. This German idealistic philosophy, originating in a nonrevolutionary social situation, may be considered as an ideological reaction to the French revolution. This explains why Kant, one of the most outstanding representatives of this philosophy, viewed pedagogy in an entirely different color than the French materialists.

Kant considers the innate nature of man in a very pessimistic manner. In his opinion the most characteristic trait of primitive man is an antisocial, destructive instinct. Man is led by his instincts and propensity toward all sorts of vices, although his reason might counsel him into the opposite direction. "Only virtue, based on repression, can make man moral." Thus Kant's opinion regarding man's natural state is nothing else but the revival of the medieval teaching of the original sin.

These pessimistic observations permeate also the work of Herbart, one of the most influential of German pedagogues. He divides the whole course of education into 3 parts: domination, teaching, and moral leadership. The task of domination is to "break the wild rebelliousness of the child." In his opinion, before the child develops a ripe will-power, he is subject to all kinds of unreasonable pugnacity which not only disturbs the good order of the grownups, but "exposes the future development of his own personality to all kinds of dangers." According to Herbart it is necessary to break this contentiousness, to teach obedience to the child, and this can be done only by force, threats, strict supervision, orders, and injunctions. In the list of punishments Herbart includes corporal punishment among others and contends that agitation for its complete abolition is inadvisable. Herbart's concept shows a rigid contrast between the natural and moral man, and the former may be turned into the latter only by teaching and moral education (leadership), which again could be accomplished only through complete suppression of his original nature.

We know that in the majority of the former Hungarian schools Herbart pedagogy was intertwined with the clerical pedagogy in a happy union. Herbart pedagogy was aimed at educating dutiful citizens for the reactionary Prussian state. And if it worked there, why should it not have worked in the realm of the emperor of Austria and later of Admiral Horthy?

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Just as Herbart pedagogy was built on the philosophy of Kant, so are the new educational schools of Paulsen and Foerster, faithful servants of imperialism, based on the modern, reactionary version of the neo-Kantian philosophy, schools which try to train the children through oppression and fear.

The "Inescapable" Heredity and Environment

During the period of imperialism all kinds of theories existed which negated the role of education. Some of these considered either heredity or environment as paramount factors in the development of human character, or accepted both these reactionary theses. According to these views the inherited traits of a person weigh upon him with the inevitability of fate during his whole lifetime; education cannot change the predestined course of his character. Likewise education is incapable of counteracting the influence of environment. In vain does the educator try to exert a benign influence upon the child; if he spends his time after school in a bad environment, he will remain bad. Environment, similarly, is an inexorable fate, shaping the development of a person's character. This environment which the bourgeois theoreticians have in mind is, of course, the supposedly unchangeable bourgeois society, which calls forth, like inevitable fate, all the bad traits in the children of the working class, making them incapable of embracing culture, while in the children of the ruling class it evokes all those faculties and abilities which enable them to gain education and become leaders of society.

Some of the authors frankly show the class direction of their extremely reactionary and unscientific opinions. Kretschmer for instance, the reactionary bourgeois psychiatrist who considers man's character just a consequence of his inherited body build, writes the following. "Outstanding talents are rarely born from coincidental meeting of heredity components, i.e., through unselective, haphazard marriages with the lower classes. Much more often are talented people bred in closed groups of professional and privileged people who have similar outlook and intermarry instead of mating with outside groups; this includes noblemen, scientists, office holding patricians and captains of industry" (Orvosi pszichologia /Medical Psychology/, Budapest, translated by Endre Gergo, page 233). These lines simply exude contempt for the people.

Alfred Binet, coauthor of the widely used Binet-Simon intelligence testing system examined adult workers and "scientifically" proved that "their mental capacity from the point of abstract apperception did not exceed that of the level of 12-year-old children" (A. Binet, Az iskolás gyermek lelektana /The Psychology of the School Child/, 1916, Budapest, translated by Valeria Dienes, page 128). Such research — independently from the subjective intentions of the researcher — were of no small benefit to the oppressive political systems.

Pedology

The sum total of all these unscientific opinions is the so-called pedological orientation. The word pedology means: study of the child. The deception in it is that it emphasizes the importance of child study, "the orientation toward the child." These views at first glance appear new, almost "revolutionary" ideas compared with the old pedagogy in which the child received hardly any consideration. This pedology, which endeavored to assure "free development" and "unhampered spontaneous growth" for the children of the top bourgeoisie, became the predominant trend in some western countries and continues to be so even now. In countries weighed down by the remnants of feudalism, as in tsarist Russia and in

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to prove the particular talents and extraordinary privileges of the ruling classes and "superior races" and on the other hand the physical and mental inferiority of the working classes and "lower races." The transplantation into Soviet science of these unscientific bourgeois principles is much more harmful, since they appear camouflaged with 'Marxist' phraseology.

Pedology, true to its basic tenets, works with pseudoscientific experimentation, with tests and meaningless questionnaires circulated among the pupils and their parents. The above quoted party resolution also discloses the substance of these experimentations. It states that the research of the pedologists is slanted against such children who momentarily appear to be deficient in their studies and discipline, and their purpose is to prove that certain defects in their progress or behavior may be explained by heredity or social reasons. Toward this aim they strive to uncover all the negative aspects, pathological twists of the pupil, his family, his relatives, ancestors, and his social setting. The party resolution especially condemns the intelligence tests, "transplanted without criticism from bourgeois class pedagogy into Soviet soil." In the course of such inquiries children of 6-7 years were given typical casuistic questions, on the basis of which they decided their "pedologic" age and mental capacity.

In the course of such pedologic research more and more children were classed as mentally retarded, injured, or "hard to train." These pupils were then excluded from the regular classes and transferred to "special" schools or classes for neurotics and such. In consequence of the harmful activity of these pedologists the number of special schools or classes has steadily grown. The great majority of children thus transferred to special schools or classes was absolutely normal. In regular schools they would have caught up with the other pupils, if given careful attention.

The pedologists set up an organization independent from the pedagogues, having their own governing bodies in the form of various groups and pedology seminars. Even in provincial towns they organized laboratories and psychological stations. These pedological organs directed the students in their choice of professions and weeded out weak scholars. In this way they exercised full control over the pedagogues. All this gravely restricted the influence and responsibility of the pedagogues in education and made uniform, purposeful education impossible.

The ultimate consequence of the pedological tenets could not be anything else but the complete rejection of the science of pedagogy. The pedologists declared pedagogy to be a "semiscientific empirism," as yet undeveloped, vacillating in its scope and methods; whereas they pronounced their anti-Marxist, harmful pedology as a universal science, qualified in every respect to direct education and the educators.

The Ravages of Pedology in Hungary

The representatives of pedology played a great role also in Hungary after the liberation; in fact they almost monopolized for quite a time the policy making positions in Hungary's public education. We also had central research institutes of pedology; in the provinces there were also child psychology agencies, all working with the methods of pedology. Pedological seminars and courses were also given to several hundred pedagogues.

In consequence of the pedologists' activity there was a constant increase in the number of so-called small special classes where "problem children" were transferred. In these classes many normal children were

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combined with a few actually backward ones under the guidance of the least able pedagogues. Immediately after the liberation the pedagogists conceived the idea that the pupils of secondary schools should also be selected on the basis of intelligence tests. They argued that this was the only way to create "real democracy" in which everybody may progress in the measure of his talents and capabilities. It goes without saying that these tests of the pedagogists would have pointed out that there are few children with worker or peasant background suitable for secondary education. Neither were children of the richer, former ruling classes enrolled in the "small special classes"; the pupils of these came from plain worker families or from orphanages still exploited by the kulaks. The party succeeded in thwarting the machinations of the pedagogists as far as the selection for secondary training was concerned. But since the building of the country's economy and the fight against the foes within occupied most of the party's energy, it was unable completely to eliminate the ravages of the pedagogists.

After the big change, when the political positions of the class enemy had been smashed, the class enemy endeavored to strengthen its situation on the cultural front and thus obstruct the laying of the foundations of socialism, an important task of which was to end the cultural monopoly of the former ruling classes. The recently established ONI [Országos Neveléstudományi Intézet — National Pedagogical Institute] fell into the hands of the pedagogues, subservient to the interests of our class enemies, and through it they endeavored to broaden their influence on public education. In addition to the abovementioned media they succeeded through maximalism and sabotage through textbooks, to drive away from secondary schools and universities a considerable percentage of worker and peasant students. With the 29 March 1950 resolution the party put an end to the machinations of the pedagogists. This however does not mean that pedagogy has not retained some influence on the theory of education and in the practical work of Hungary's schools.

It is due mainly to the ravages of pedagogy that the science of education has not sufficiently progressed in Hungary. Up to 1950 textbooks written by pedagogues (e.g., Ferenc Mészai, Gyermektanulmány [Child Study], or Farago and Kiss, Az új nevelés kérdése) were used in Hungarian universities and normal schools, comprising the material for postgraduate work in pedagogy. They deliberately prevented Hungarian educators from studying the achievements of Soviet pedagogy. The science of pedagogy could start its development in Hungary only after the 1950 party resolution and become the science of communist education of youth.

The Marxist Conception of the Relationship between Education and Heredity

As already mentioned above, only the Marxist-Leninist ideology was able scientifically to illuminate the correlation of education, heredity, and environment in the building of human character.

Marxist ideology does not deny the role of heredity. Marx and Engels have clearly perceived that man "is an active being endowed with natural, living forces," existing in him as nuclei, disposition, and instincts. Everyone is born with certain specific abilities and temperament, comprising the natural potentialities of spiritual (and naturally also physical) growth. These preconditions are not fully developed faculties, not ideas or opinions, just the possibilities of development: dispositions.

These natural faculties, the preconditions of individual growth, and individual differences are determined by our innate type of nervous system, the hereditary structure of nerves. In small children, sometimes

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even in infants, one may observe certain temperamental differences and individual traits; further, inclination toward music, or interest in drawing manifest themselves at an early age. These individual variations appearing in early childhood cannot be attributed to environment or training, but are rather manifestations of inherited peculiarities of nervous structure.

It was Pavlov who first studied scientifically the differences in the types of higher nervous functions. He demonstrated the basic qualities of the nervous system and showed that the types of higher nervous functions may be differentiated by the combination of such faculties. It is well known that the attributes of the nervous system are: (1) the strength of basic functions — stimulation and checking — which characterize the working ability of the nervous cells, (2) the balance of stimulation and checking, and (3) the speed of these functions, i.e., how quickly they can change from one to the other. Pavlov, accepting Hippocrates' classification of temperament, proves that the characteristic qualities of the different temperaments (choleric, sanguine, melancholic, and phlegmatic) are determined by the basic differences of nervous systems, the peculiarities of higher nervous activity. The speed and duration of nervous couplings, therefore the natural basis of our physical and mental activities, may also be explained with the force, speed and mobility of the stimulating and checking processes.

Our innate dispositions however are only the preconditions of development and do not determine development itself. To cause these potentialities to develop into abilities and talents, certain conditions are necessary, i.e., environment that makes the development of potentialities possible, training and education which turn the possibilities of environment into actual fact, as well as the character traits. The natural basis of traits is the temperament, but what will be the ultimate character is determined by the conditions in which the individual lives and the influences to which he is subjected during his formative years. Most important among these is education, meaning those influences which are deliberately and consciously directed toward the ripening individual by the already more developed people, with the express intention to facilitate the unfolding of the individual in an organized manner.

The mere fact however that a child is born with a leaning toward music or — as the saying goes — has a mathematical sense, does not necessarily mean that he will become a creative composer or mathematician, nor even that he will acquire any musical or mathematical knowledge. That depends, quite patently, on whether his dispositions will be noticed at all, whether he has a chance to study these subjects, whether he receives adequate musical or mathematical instruction. In the framework of exploiting class society millions of children of the oppressed classes are born with outstanding possibilities which very rarely develop into abilities because their situation, their one-sided and poor education does not give them the chance for the exercise of activities which would develop their possibilities into faculties. Marx and Engels in their various works showed with deep and distressing clarity that in the capitalist society private property and differentiation of labor are the shackles of humanity, and that the labor conditions prevalent in capitalist factories of necessity lead to the general physical and mental deterioration and one-sided growth of the working man. In consequence of the specialization prevailing in capitalist factories the worker usually is compelled to perform throughout his life very limited, narrow physical labor which makes him essentially just an extension of the machine. Apart from his specialized skills all his other talents and previously acquired abilities wither away.

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Every healthy child, born with normal nervous system is endowed with manifold potentialities which could be developed in several directions. Of course his potentialities are greater in certain directions than in others and his education in the proper lines may bring about higher attainments. But appropriate, intensive cultivation of his less explicit potentialities will not be fruitless either. Pedagogical experience has proved that among children born with normal, healthy nervous system none are absolutely unable to carry a tune or completely incapable to draw, or master any subject of elementary or high schools. In general every child possesses natural abilities required to pass through the curricula of grade and high school. It goes without saying however that the quality of his given faculties sets limits to their development. The child with moderate hearing can learn how to read notes and play a musical instrument; he will be able to enjoy serious music but will not become a concert artist. Another one with less mathematical sense can with good system and industry learn the mathematical curriculum of high school but will never develop into a mathematical genius.

Talents and propensities rarely manifest themselves early and spontaneously. The exact faculties and the degree to which they are present in a child may be discovered mainly through many-sided education and multiform activities. Unless we give the child multifaceted training, it may happen that, for lack of activity, certain of his potentialities will remain hidden and will never develop.

Therefore a multiform education is the prerequisite of the free and bountiful development of individuality. Only many-sided education can assure the individual of unfolding all his latent potentialities so as to bring to the surface his best qualities and thus develop his talents. The experiences of many-sided education show that the majority of people have some leanings in one or another direction. There are hardly any completely lacking in talent; rather there are those whose potentialities were not discovered and developed.

Marxist pedagogy considers as its aim the many-sided development of the growing generation, meaning thereby education toward the harmonious unity of intellect, techniques, morality, esthetical sense, and physical prowess. Establishment of multilateral education, including also the children of working people, became a realistic possibility only in our society, the socialist society. The many-sided developing of people's physical and mental abilities is vital for a society which on its way to build socialism and communism gradually satisfies better and better the material and cultural needs of the people.

We have already stated that the original structure of the nervous system, the initial type of higher nervous activity are innate. Pavlov points out however that the type of higher nervous activity is not immutable. It changes with living conditions and human activities, and under the influence of "continuous study and education, meant in the most sweeping sense of the word." Besides the already mentioned characteristics of the nervous system Pavlov considered as physiological reason for its change the most important quality of the same: its high degree of mutability. All theories which consider the person's development, capabilities, and character determined by heredity tear the living organism out of his environment, denying that outside influences could modify the inherited structure of the nervous system. These theories interpret the relationship of structure and dynamics in a purely metaphysical sense. They consider it as a rigid chain of cause and effect, negating the reciprocity of the two, and deny that living conditions, environment, and especially social milieu and education can have any influence upon the nervous structure. Disregarding the facts, they

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endeavor to prove the immutability of the inherited nervous type.

The biology of Michurin and the physiology of Pavlov have shown the fallacy of these reactionary, unscientific theories, and proved that heredity is not a rigid condition but that heredity itself is the result of long historical interchange between the race and its surroundings; in consequence it is alterable.

This is a never-ending process, and thus not only those impacts are consequential upon heredity which molded the past generations, but also those influences which bear on the organism during the lifetime of the individual. Michurin and Pavlov have also proved that outside factors might turn into inner ones, that under the proper circumstances acquired reflexes and characteristics might become hereditary.

Already Marx and Engels dealt with the problem of heredity and solved it essentially correctly with the materialist dialectics. In their German Ideology they point out the changeable character of heredity as dependent on the specific conditions of environment. Engels treats this in a particularly concrete manner in his work The Dialectics of Nature. Here Engels points out the connection between work and heredity in human development. He convincingly proves that work created man and that labor and society are the source of man's physical and mental evolution. The hands, after their liberation, "could gain new functions and this acquired greater dexterity was transmitted from generation to generation in steadily growing degree." "Only work, adaptation to new activities, the transfer of differentiation of muscles, sinews and -- throughout longer periods -- also of changed bone structure, and the steady adaptation to further new, more refined activities of those inherited faculties, enabled the human hands to reach such pinnacles which could create the marvelous paintings of Raphael, the sculptures of Thorwaldsen, and the music of Paganini."

Thus we have to differentiate between the inborn type of higher nervous functions, and that which is the result of living conditions and education. These discoveries of Marxism and modern natural history point to the immense possibilities for mankind's development. In consequence of favorable outside influences and multilateral education such vistas may be opened to a person's development which were not present in the original structure of his nervous system.

Education and Social Environment

First of all we have to point out in this connection that man is not the passive chattel of social conditions. People through their revolutionary activity can change the social conditions and thereby alter themselves also, creating new conditions for their own activities and development. Marx expresses this in a striking manner in his No 3 Feuerbach thesis, criticizing mechanical materialism and the French materialists in the following words. "The materialistic teaching about changing the conditions and education forgets that it is people who alter these conditions. The coincidence of changing conditions and human activities can be conceived and understood only as revolutionary activity."

This Marxist thesis, startlingly confirmed by everyday life and the practice of social revolution and socialist construction, is a striking refutation of those reactionary tenets which teach the fatalistic effects of social conditions upon man. The conditions of capitalist society, as we have seen above, beyond doubt influence in an adverse manner the physical, mental, and moral development of the workers and promote in them the growth of some unpleasant qualities. According

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to the bourgeois theoreticians this situation cannot be changed because the capitalist social conditions are everlasting. This is contradicted by the fact that the conscious layer of the laboring classes, even under the capitalist system, through class struggle, developed outstanding human abilities and fine moral character. And in the social revolution, the struggles of building socialism, the laboring masses, now purged of all the dirt and slugs of exploitation, became the carriers of the highest type of morality and are on the road to conquering culture and science.

Pedagogical practice has proved that bad traits caused by improper environment will disappear in a favorable one; the new, well organized way of living will develop new, good qualities in the children. A fine example of this can be found in the activity of the great Soviet pedagogue Makarenko. He turned several thousands of neglected, delinquent children into useful Soviet citizens. Had these children fallen into the hands of pedologues, there would have been no end to various tests to find out what hereditary and environmental factors had caused their bad habits. When they burned the waifs' rags at the settlement of Makarenko they symbolically burned, at the same time, the past too. With communist purposefulness and great pedagogical mastery Makarenko organized the practical living conditions of the children, their relationship with each other and toward their work and society in such a manner that these developed in them communist traits and suppressed all the harmful traces of the past.

We have seen from the above discussions that man is the product of his social environment. In order to elucidate the problem of the reciprocal relationship between education and social environment, we must consider the general conclusions apparent in the history of education, i.e., that education basically depends on the system of production and the social conditions; these determine the character of education: its purpose, tasks, content, its ways and means and forms of organization. Education, although it most seriously considers the physiological and mental peculiarities of the child's and adolescent's development, is essentially a process depending on the superstructure of society. This means that whenever the underlying base, the economic order of society, is changed, education also undergoes a transformation. Nothing proves this thesis better than the complete change which came about before our own eyes in the educational system of Hungary and which is continuing even now.

All these reveal as untenable the concept of the Utopists that we can establish a new society through education. Nowadays even the most reactionary circles accept such ideas. Education however can never produce a new society; to achieve this a revolutionary uprooting of the old ways of production and the old social conditions is necessary. Only this can create the conditions for an education which will mold the masses according to the requirements of the new system of production and society.

The changing of people, the evolution of a new type of man, is eminently the consequence of the order of production and social conditions; this dependence however does not mean that the change is a mechanical one, that the transformation of people would automatically follow the economic and social change. The social change does not spontaneously crystallize in the minds of the people; even after the development of new economic and social conditions, old opinions, customs, and ethical norms survive for a long while in the minds of men. Especially during the period of the building of socialism, when the influences of the old order are still active, when a large segment of agriculture is individualistic, do the capitalist remnants present

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constitute a grave danger in the consciousness of people and often are the greatest hindrance to progress.

Comrade Stalin illuminated sharply the essence of this question in his 1924 report on the results of the Thirteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik).

"The old customs and techniques, traditions and prejudices," said he, "which we inherited from the old society, are very dangerous enemies of socialism. These traditions and customs keep enthralled millions of the laboring masses, sometimes even whole strata of the proletariat, and sometimes constitute a serious danger even to the survival of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore the fight against these traditions and customs, their unconditional uprooting in all spheres of our activities, and ultimately the new generation's education in the spirit of proletarian socialism are such important obligations of the party that without them the victory of socialism is impossible."

In the same vein Comrade Rakosi expressed himself in 1950 at the First Congress of DJSZ [Dolgozo Ifjusag Szovetsege -- Alliance of Working Youth].

It is evident from all these that education, conditioned by the concrete manner of production, plays a decisive role in the development of mankind, in the shaping of man's individuality and character. Education, as all phases of the superstructure, cannot be neutral toward its foundation; rather it serves the strengthening and improvement of this new base.

We must reply to one more question. Is it possible to fix aims of socialist education, a higher type of purpose in a society where the socialist method of production is not yet the uniform rule, where a wide layer of small producers still exists? It is possible, for even if not perfect, the socialist forms of production and society which are going to become dominant in the future are already present because we now possess those progressive ideas that may successfully undertake the socialist education of both the new and old generations. The concentration of these efforts on the education of youth will particularly well serve the progressive direction of social development.

We know very well that the viewpoint of people, especially the socialist outlook of youth, can only be molded successfully if we are able to create living conditions which will harmonize with and strengthen the above ideology and ethical norms. Is it possible to create in our educational institutions the kind of environment, the kind of real and mutual ties between the pupils which are more progressive than those prevailing in certain strata of society and the mutual ties within some of the families? The experiences of Hungary's best schools and most outstanding educators confirm the possibility of creating such environment. This is the secret of Makarenko's success. This is not only possible but also absolutely necessary because only in this case can education build not only for today but for tomorrow too and in the strictest sense of the word build the "future" generation which will be able to carry progress forward and fight against any reactionary, backward trends.

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